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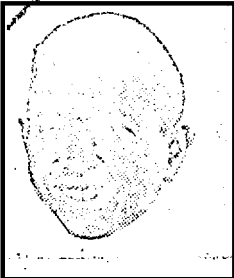
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On the Air

By Del Carnes

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Television in Review

"CUBA," said Chet Huntley, "gave President Kennedy his worst defeat and his greatest success." Thus did NBC begin the first of a two-part "White Paper" series on U.S. foreign policy in Cuba. Tuesday night's episode concerned the late president's biggest setback—the Bay of Pigs invasion. Sunday night the program will examine JFK's biggest achievement—the Cuban missile crisis.

For a TV documentary, the "Bay of Pigs" was extraordinarily frank. Huntley called the Cuban debacle a failure of United States policy that led to a failure of United States power." He said the tactics used to back Cuban exiles in their quest to overthrow Castro were "reminiscent of the days of America's 'Big Stick' diplomacy."

To a great extent, the story was told in interviews with Cuban exile leaders and men who went ashore at the Bay of Pigs. They were critical of the U.S. for (1) assuming too much control of the pre-invasion planning and (2) not providing air cover during the invasion itself. It has been pretty well agreed that lack of air cover was a major factor for the invasion's failure.

American officials, however, denied air support had been promised.

Interviews with Allen Dulles, former director of the Central Intelligence Agency; excerpts from statements of President Eisenhower and Kennedy, former vice president Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Dean Rusk; and Adlai Stevenson addressing the United Nations were highlighted in the hour.

The program was a painstaking and magnificent study of contemporary history—one of the year's best.